Houston Chronicle

Neighborhood News



La Porte Police, other agencies work together to curb drunk driving

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Published: June 21st, 2011

The Fourth of July holiday weekend is a time for revelry, but the La Porte and Pasadena police departments are taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of the traveling public by hosting their third "No Refusal" campaign against drunk driving. In the operation - scheduled for Friday and Saturday, July 1 & 2 - police can require suspected drunk drivers to submit blood samples to determine blood-alcohol level.

The program is one of the tools credited in decreasing drunk-driving incidents along area roadways, said Sgt. John Krueger, public information officer for the La Porte Police Department. "Most Harris County residents are well aware of the high traffic volume throughout the area," Krueger said. "Independence weekend will just add to that fact. Worse, just one drunk driver can create a world of misery for a countless number of people. But, while drunk drivers will undoubtedly be hitting the roads during Fourth of July weekend, residents can be sure our DWI enforcement officers will be keeping the roadways safe."

The No Refusal program is an enforcement strategy promoted by The National Traffic Highway Safety Administration, Krueger said. "Under these operations, police are able to legally acquire a proper blood sample from drivers who refuse to give a breath sample," he said. Should the suspect choose not to provide a sample, officers will have a Harris County Assistant District Attorney on site to draft a search warrant in order to obtain it. During the designated periods, both prosecutors and judges make themselves available to simplify and expedite the warrant acquisition process."This also helps build cases for DWI conviction.

La Porte Police Department highly publicizes the No Refusal program in order to let both the public and DWI offenders know that the chances of being caught, arrested, and convicted for drunk driving offenses will without a doubt increase during these efforts," Krueger said. During the same time period last year, the department reported a significant

increase in DWI arrests — 51 percent over 2009. The increase is believed to have been due, in large part, to the proactive efforts of vigilant officers, Krueger said.

La Porte officers will be assigned specifically to DWI patrol duty, while officers from Harris County Precinct 8 constable's office and the Texas Department of Public Safety will also be in the city looking for DWI offenders. Numerous other agencies will patrol southeast Harris County with a specific focus on catching DWI offenders."Outside agencies in southeast Harris County making their DWI arrests during the No Refusal program will have the option of bringing those offenders to the La Porte Police Department for their processing as well," Krueger said.

The "No Refusal" Operation will take place at the La Porte Police Department on Friday, July 1. The Pasadena Police Department will have another operation Saturday, July 2. For more information, call 281-471-2141.